



Early Intervention/ Early Childhood Special Education Advocacy Day

Step-by-step instructions for contacting your legislator

1. Find out who your State Representative and Senator are:

Visit <https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/FindYourLegislator/leg-districts.html> to get their email address and phone number. If you call, you may get a staff or voicemail. Feel free to leave a message or talk to a staff.

2. Tell them who you are.

Introduce yourself. Tell them where you live in their district.

3. Ask to make an appointment

4. Prepare for your meeting

Use one value statement to introduce the importance of EI/ECSE services to families. Some examples are below, or you can write your own.

- Every child needs supports to learn. Some children with disabilities may need different supports to catch up to their peers, neighbors and friends. EI/ECSE gives children with disabilities and their families the support they need to enter kindergarten ready to learn.
- If you expect children to succeed, they will. Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education programs help children with disabilities and their families gain the tools they need to succeed in school and beyond.
- We know that investing early in children with disabilities is a good investment. Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education programs help children with disabilities and their families learn about the supports they need to succeed.
- Parent engagement is a critical piece of education success. Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education programs support parents and give them the skills to be engaged advocates for their child's school success.

Explain the powerful services that EI/ECSE provides children with disabilities and their families:

- Early Intervention & Early Childhood Special Education work as a seamless system to provide special education services for children with disabilities age birth to five.
- These are critical services that provide parent training and support, and also provide skill development and learning for children with disabilities.

Tell your personal story.

- How has EI/ECSE helped your child?
- How has EI/ECSE helped your family?
- Describe one example of a specific thing that EI/ECSE did that helped you or your child.
- How is your life and your child's future better as a result of EI/ECSE?

Now introduce the problem:

- The number of children using EI/ECSE services has increased, but the funding has not kept pace. As a result, children can only access a fraction of the EI/ECSE services they need.
- Only one out of three Oregon children using EI/ECSE services are actually receiving the evidence based and recommended service level.
- Of the children with the highest needs, less than 2% are currently receiving evidence based and recommended service levels.

Now, it's time to propose a solution.

- EI/ECSE services change the lives and futures of Oregon's children with disabilities and their families – but it can only be effective if adequately funded.
- Please support Oregon's children with disabilities by increasing the EI/ECSE budget.

Ask for what we need.

- Increase overall funding of EI/ECSE services to raise service levels to make progress toward the evidence based practices.
- With these critical funds, we can ensure that families and children with disabilities have the skills and supports they need to succeed.
- If we expect them to succeed, they will. If we expect them to succeed, we need to fund EI/ECSE to support them to succeed.

Last, thank your Legislator for their service to our state!

Just one more step! [Email](#) Oregon's Alliance for Early Intervention to let us know who you called or emailed, and whether you got a response!